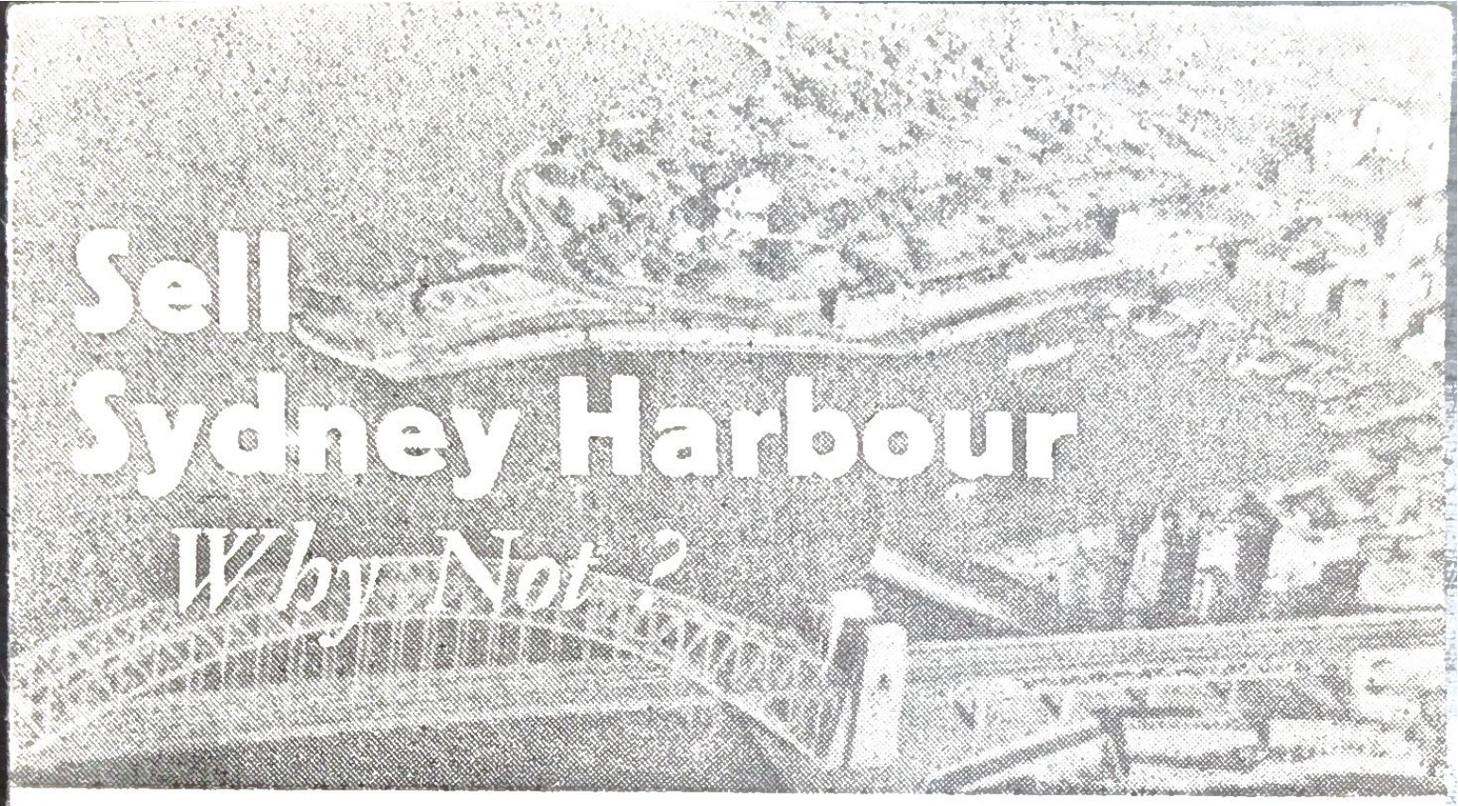

How To Pay For The War

IT has been a costly war. "Money! Money! Money!" is the cry of the Government. "We must have money. The people must pour out their earnings or their savings to enable the Government to pay for this very costly war."

Thus by much urging and expensive propaganda the people are persuaded to make their very necessary contributions to another Government Loan.

But why not try a change of tactics and **sell** something that many people would be glad to buy—Sydney Harbour, for instance!

Sydney Harbour is one of the world's most famous harbours. It is of vast extent, with a score of delightful coves and backwaters. What would some people not give to call a bit of this

famous Harbour their very own! Just think of the possibilities.

Suppose the Government starts at once, then to draw up subdivisional plans of the Harbour, with all its inlets and coves. Let these be suitably publicised; and, in due course, let a few wonderful weeks be set apart for the sale by public auction of the various lots. It would constitute the most memorable real estate event in the history of Australia.

People would gather from all the States. Representatives would attend from England, America, and the East. Competition for special lots would possess an intensely dramatic interest. And, when all the fever had abated, the Government would find itself with money to burn.

The thing is all so simple—it is amazing someone has not thought of it before. It is what any person can do when ready cash is getting low—sell some surplus asset!

A CHARMING PICTURE

Naturally after the sale there would be a few difficulties to overcome and a few adjustments to make. For instance, when the rightful owners of the various lots became known, each Ferry Company would require to negotiate for a lane for its steamer tracks. It would be a rather tedious business. For one track may run through water

or waters owned by some hundreds of people, and each owner would demand a "reasonable" royalty. So that, when the Ferry Companies at length discovered that the payment of so many royalties would of necessity double or even treble passenger fares—well, of course, such news would be so much in line with what the people have been accustomed to that they would gladly pay the increased fares! They would be getting so much more for their money!! Think of it! Private ownership would soon transfigure Sydney Harbour. It is easy to imagine such things as house-boats all along the steamer routes, little islands built by millionaires and adorned with castles; owners busy catching their share of the Harbour fish: floating amusement palaces; in short, a new Sydney Harbour of fanciful novelty.

Then, too, all sailing and rowing craft, lighters and tugs, divers and swimmers, would gladly pay royalty for every trip they made, or every simple swim they enjoyed!

Well, would they? We just wonder if that is not stretching it a bit **too** far. Would they really be ready to pay for what was now constituted a privilege, but which they formerly enjoyed as a natural right?

The good reader will have already guessed that we have no serious design upon Sydney's beautiful Harbour. If

reason can be given why land should not be so controlled? If monopoly of the Harbour by a select company is obviously a fantastic idea, is not the monopoly of land by a select company more absurdly fantastic? **For man can neither live nor work without land,** but we **could** rub along without the Harbour!

WHO MADE THIS MUDDLE?

Human flesh is said to be "heir to a thousand ills." But for the most part the ills that afflict mankind arise from man's failure to obey natural law. For instance, it is a law inherent in the very nature of things that man shall have free access to land for his very sustenance and development. If he is denied that elementary and necessary right, the way is open for every shade of evil. Men, that otherwise would walk in Eden like gods—independent and free—are forced to beg for the right to work for their livelihood from certain of their fellows, who have dispossessed them. The usurpers may claim that the law gave a title to their usurpation, but that does not make the law right. For no human law can be right which sets itself over and above natural law. And every such violation of natural law carries its own inevitable and tragic consequences, such as stalk abroad in the world to-day: injustice, confusion, poverty, strife, and disaster.

such a thing as we have depicted could become an accomplished fact, Sydney Harbour, from being a thing of beauty, would become a by-word among the nations—a colossal and ugly monument to the folly of man.

If such a fantastic thing could come to pass the Government would certainly have money to burn; thousands of people would certainly become wealthy by being privileged to charge every user of the Harbour a royalty or rent for even so small a boon as paddling on the beach; but poor John Citizen, and the colossal ugly blunder itself, would cry to high heaven for judgment.

A PERPLEXING PARADOX

Now, this very foolish thing that we have imagined as happening to Sydney Harbour HAS happened here in Australia—not to any marine area, BUT TO THE LAND. If when applied to a beautiful harbour the idea of selling privileges to a select company is fantastic, why is it not equally fantastic when applied to the beautiful and much more necessary land? Economically, the main difference between the two is that the harbour is covered with water, and the land is covered with trees and grass. If it is unthinkable that Sydney Harbour should be controlled in any way other than to serve the common good of ALL THE PEOPLE, what sound

land. If the Government, then, will but make its own responsibility to see that he is able to exercise that right, paying **to the community** a just rental for the land used; that he is free to use to the full his own powers, and to sell the product of his labour in a free and open market; if the Government, in short, will decree that land values created by community effort belong, not to any section of the people, but to ALL THE PEOPLE, **and legislate accordingly,** then the Government may forget its doles, its subsidies and bonuses, its elaborate artificial control of prices, its restriction of markets, and its taxes upon human industry, and trust simply to the energy and intelligence of free men to exercise their natural abilities, and provide amply for themselves and their dependants.

FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT

The plain function of Government is to secure not simply the greatest good for the greatest number, but economic justice for all. This is not to be accomplished by keeping the people for ever in swaddling clothes, dependent upon governmental spoon-feeding. But it can be achieved by abolishing unjust privileges, and restoring to the people the natural rights which have been filched from them; those rights of which they have been and are being legally, yet

fraudently, despoiled for a sorry mess of pottage. The wrongful act of one generation condemns all who succeed them to pay tribute to a comparatively few private individuals for use of something those individuals never produced.

THE GOAL AHEAD

We are fighting to-day for the Four Freedoms. They may become four phantoms! "Freedom from Want," at any rate, cannot be assured until based upon these natural rights, for such a freedom can only be rooted in justice. Such freedom must leave man free to enjoy to the full fruits of his own labour. And from such a freedom would arise a social order without barriers or fetters, a society in which every man might sit under his own vine and fig tree, none daring to make him afraid.

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"The equal right of all men to the use of land is as clear as their equal right to breathe the air.

"We would simply take for the community what belongs to the community, the rent that attaches to land by the growth of the community."

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